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Bush Urges Secrecy On Reporters List

By Norman Kempster
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CIA Director George Bush has urged executives of The New York Times and CBS news to support the agency's efforts to keep secret the names of journalists who have aided intelligence operations, a CIA spokesman said today.

The spokesman said the question of CIA use of reporters as cover for spying was discussed during supposedly off-the-record lunches last week.

"He has known the people at The Times and CBS on a personal basis for a number of years," the spokesman said. "There was no set agenda but the subject, of course, was brought up."

THE WASHINGTON Star reported in 1973 that the CIA was using journalists as cover for intelligence work. After the revelation, then-CIA Director William E. Colby said the agency would no longer employ full-time staff members of major U.S. newspapers and broadcast media.

However, Colby said then — and repeated as recently as last month — that the agency continues to employ free-lance journalists in intelligence work.

The Washington Post, quoting informed sources, said today that officials of both The Times and CBS offered general support to Bush's appeal to "bury the past" and keep secret the names of reporters who worked for the agency.

The Post said the Senate Intelligence Committee was informed that one news executive told Bush: "We protect our (news) sources. You protect yours."

HOWEVER, Arthur O. Sulzberger, publisher of The Times, said that the subject of whether the CIA ought to

disclose such names to the Senate committee "never arose" during a 90-minute meeting with Bush last week. And A.M. Rosenthal, managing editor, of The Times, said that both he and The Times supported "complete disclosure" of the names of any of its own correspondents as well as those of other organizations who had ever worked for or cooperated with the CIA in gathering intelligence.

Richard Salant, president of CBS News, said that the subject of such disclosures was raised with Bush himself and other CBS executives, including news anchorman Walter Cronkite, but that the network officials had "urged disclosure" of the names in question.

The Post said Cronkite believed the names should be "put on the table for the protection of those not guilty of such behavior."

The CIA spokesman said Bush met with Sulzberger, editorial page editor John Oakes and vice president Sydney Gruson. He said Bush met the same day with CBS board chairman William Paley, Salant and Cronkite.